1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
SA15 Mosquito SA15

Old men and women should always be addressed as *dama* "grandfather" and *kuka* "grandmother" among the Miskito, the use of their personal names in talking to them being considered very irreverent. 601

Two men or two women may exchange their names, or merely some sort of personal property, in form of friendship, as a pledge of perpetual amity; they then call each other *libra*. This habit is common among the Miskito and is also found occasionally among the Sumu. Such friends are as dear to each other as brothers, and an Indian may trust his wife with perfect safety with his *libra*. 572

SALUTATIONS

Common form of salutation.—Handshaking (M.: *mihta sibaya;* T., P.: *tiñ isilnaia;* U.: *tiñ isilnika*) constitutes now the general form of salutation, but this habit seems to be of foreign introduction. When two Indians meet the one will say: "How are you?" (M.: *naksa*, abbreviated from *nakki sma;* T., P.: *parasta;* U.: *yampara*), while the other replies: "I am well" (M.: *diñkwa sna;* T., P.: *yammi lik yuñ;* U.: *yamka yuñ*). When they take leave, the Miskito will say to each other *disabi*, contracted from *disabya* (for *yawan kli disabya* "we will speak again"), which corresponds to the Twahka *yulbdudarañ*. The Twahka will, however, more frequently make use of the general form of salutation *parasta* upon separating, whereas their kindred say *kaltaldarañ* (P.) and *kaltalwarañ* (U.), that is "we will see you again." 576

Upon Indians returning from a prolonged absence their female relations will sit down in a corner of the hut, throw a cloth over their head, and begin to cry with a dirgelike song.

Reception of visitors.—There are no communal houses for the reception of strangers; the latter are generally directed to the dwelling of the headman or sukya. Visitors arriving by canoe may give notice of their approach by blowing a conch shell. If a party of Indians arrive at a settlement where the men are absent they do not land unless they have near relations there, but they talk with the women from the canoe. 574

In former days the reception of a stranger or visitor appears to have been of a more demonstrative nature than now. Exquemelin (English edit.: 252), referring to the Miskito of Cabo Gracias a Dios, states that "the host goes a distance of three or four hundred steps out of his hut to receive his guests, and upon their approach he lies down flat upon his face without any motion, as if dead. The guest then lifts him up and together they go to the festival. Here the guests in turn lie down, and the master of the house lifts them up one by one and with his hand leads them into the cottage to a seat." This form has been out of use for many years. Nowadays the host does

2: Kirchhoff E-4 (no date) 1948
SA15 Mosquito SA15

MYTHOLOGY

The literature, reported mainly from the *Mosquito* and *Sumo*, includes the many songs. An extensive folklore includes stories of the chase, of fishing, and of war. Quasi-historical tales speak of mysterious tribes who preceded the present inhabitants in the region. A migration legend says that the former home of the *Mosquito* and *Sumo* was on the Isthmus of Rivas. The *Sumo* version of a creation legend recounts the common origin of the *Mosquito* and *Sumo*.

LORE AND LEARNING

Rules of etiquette are elaborate even in everyday life. Time may be measured by the number of knots on a string or by pebbles placed in a gourd. The year was formerly divided into 13 months, the last of which was occasionally dropped in order to keep the months in adjustment with the seasons. The *Mosquito* and *Sumo* employ a vigesimal numerical system.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Conzemius, 1932; Exquemelin, 1678; Von Hagen, 1943.

3: Pijoan D-5 (ca. 1945) 1946
SA15 Mosquito SA15

of quarrel between two women. The fact remains that very little wrong-doing exists among the Miskito since once a wrongdoer is found out he loses the respect of his community and usually moves to another locality. It a debtor refuses to pay or refund an object or money borrowed, the creditor informes the village of this fact and he can go to the plantation of the debtor and pay himself in provisions without risk. Such pressure usually causes the debtor to make goods his debt.

In rare cases today poisoning is used to exterminate an enemy. This is accomplished by the use of poisonous extracts from plants, alligator gall, or cyanide stolen from the mines. If, however, an Indian shoots his enemy, he must likewise follow him to death. In certain cases, if an Indian has been insulted and cannot collect payment, he commits suicide, wherepon the offender must do the same. In most instances the threat in itself brings apology and payment. In general there is little crime among the Miskito.

The Indians show great reserve, are relatively silent, honest and generally reliable. Stinginess is considered the worst vice and foreigners who bestow gifts are known as good men. They are not quarrelsome. Recent contacts with foreigners has increased their shrewdness and they are less shy than they were years ago.

Members of the family address each other according to sex and relation, such as mother, father, daughter, brother, etc. Each has a name given for some peculiarity. Thus, an infant receives no name until some characteristic is noted.

The mentioning of a deceased person's name is taboo and is a direct insult to refer to the person in the presence of relatives. Husband and wife call each other *mayi*, my consort; before a child is born to them he calls her *kika*, girl, while she calls him *wahma*, young man. After a child is born they often call each other *lukpi yapti*, my child's mother, and *lukpi aisa*, my child's father. *Mahma* or *masa* are used to address a son or brother, whereas *kika* or *misis* refer to daughter or sister. Old men and women are called *dama*, grandfather, and *kaka*, grandmother. The common form of salutation is *naksa* and occasionally *nakki sma* (how are you?) The other replies *aiñsa sna* (I am well). When they take leave the expression is *aisabi* (we will speak again).

DWELLINGS

The villages *(tawan)* are located chiefly on the banks of waterways, rivers and lagoons. The reason for this may be twofold. First the waterways form the chief source of transportation by boat and secondly agriculture and wild fruits can be developed and secured near